On the heresy of the Rastafarian Religion

Humble Servant of the Lord

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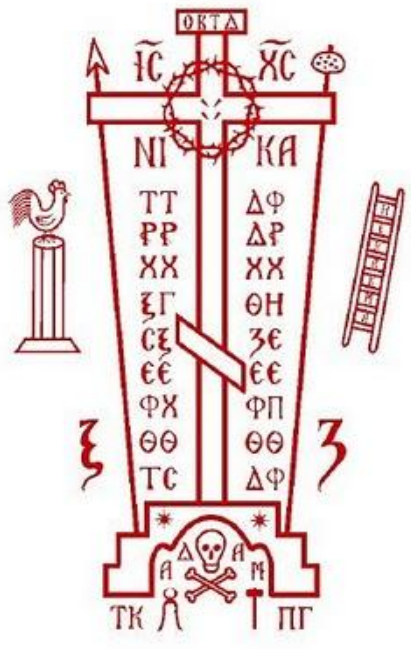


Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many Antichrists have come. This is how we will know that this is the last hour. They went from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us. But you have the anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth. I do not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it and no lie comes from the truth. Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the Antichrist.

1 John 2 : 8 - 22

Preface

"Brothers, it is later than you think. Hasten, therefore, to do the work of God"

We find ourselves in an age of spiritual confusion and death. Spiritually blinded, our souls are lying dormant, trapped in a continual swing from modern nihilism to temporary pleasure. The modern soul has been corrupted by the spirit of the times, nihilism has entered the soul and has completely destroyed it. For the few lovers of truth what is there to be done?

It was upon reading a few pages of the prophetic book by the recently canonized Saint of North America. In *Orthodoxy and the Religion of the Future* by St Seraphim Rose warns us of the dangers of modern times. These so-called spiritual groups and religious movements who frequently present themselves as hippie and harmless but inwardly carry the spirit of Antichrist. Heavily inspired by his work in various other spiritual topics such as Nihilism and the inward ascent of the Heart towards God, I have taken up the task of presenting one of the many heresies that still present itself in this modern era.

This brief paper only serves as a window into a movement where the infinite Creator has been reduced to mere racial expression and political rebellion, directly obstructing the true ascent of man towards eternal union with the Divine (*theosis*). I attempt to address all the key aspects of this movement directly comparing it to the truth

Introduction

The Rastafarian heresy originates from the land of Jamaica and finds itself settled in the eastern region of Africa. The land of Ethiopia, having been blessed by God with its rich mountain ranges, flowing rivers and luscious grasslands are home to great spiritual sites and shrines. Such as the various Churches, Monasteries and Cave dwellings of the spiritual land. Such as that of the Lalibela Church, St George Church, Tigray rock churches and the great church of Christ located in a cave. It is important to say that each of these churches hold great significance for the Ethiopians. As a result of these christians dwellings there has been a great importance of maintaining and protecting the environment. Which is important as it is the very land that protected the Ethiopians from colonial oppression. The very land of this nation put the country in an advantage when the forces from Italy came to try to convert and oppress the people of this orthodox nation. The very word "Ethiopia" finds its meaning from the greek term *Aithiopia* (*Αἰθιοπία*) , which can be split into two words, notably *aíthō* meaning burn or blaze, and the second part being *ops* meaning face or eye. From these two Greek words the combination can be named to form the following term: "Land of the burnt face" or the "sun- burned". This linguistic origin reveals the rich cultural heritage of the Mediterranean world found in the development of Ethiopia.

In contrast, the island of Jamaica contains various gems such as the tropical biomes and sandy beaches alike, with a huge emphasis placed on its past. Jamaica and the whole of the Caribbean region was colonised under the rule of the British, which led it to be part of the common wealth. Which is the overarching name given to all countries that fall under the rule and control of the country of Great Britain. This control of the land, resources and overall political structure of the people caused great distress among the people. The British, having been the previous "masters" of the Jamaicans, brought with them the teachings of the King James Bible in which they used to execute their plan of proving that the white race were inferior and that Jesus was indeed White. This incorrect use of scripture was influenced by Satan as he himself had scripture to tempt

Christ on the mountain. During his forty days in which Christ was fasting the devil had appeared and tried using scripture as a stumble block in his fast (Matthew 4:1-11). Similar to Satan and the fallen angels, the British and all colonial forces twisted scripture to suit it according to their needs and to serve their racist and oppressive ideology. Having both difficult pasts and histories of racial oppression between the two countries. As a result the people of both Ethiopia and Jamaica were put in a great spiritual crisis. As they believe that God himself had forsaken them in times of great racial and spiritual struggle. This idea cannot be further from the truth, as during these times of great struggle and persecution, God is with them and is guiding them towards his light and love. Additionally another important and possibly ignorant justification for their beliefs stems from iconographic depictions of God. The HRF claims that icons and its portrayal of Jesus and various saints were used as racial domination over minority groups in both Africa and in Jamaica. It goes on and states that these iconographic portrayals of Jesus Christ and various other Christian saints were painted in a way to spiritually oppress and dominate non - whites. Such as having an icon of Christ being depicted with the typical characteristics of a northern european, namely having blonde hair, blue eyes and pale skin. However this is a simple matter of cultural context and referencing, it is not racial at all. This crucial misunderstanding of iconography will be discussed more in depth under the iconographic section of this paper. There is great confusion that needs to be addressed, a way of reasoning that used the biblical scriptures to justify their belief in Ethiopian Emperor Haille Selassie. Their belief, although only partially, is strengthened by the so-called “prophetic statement” from the African activist Marcus Garvey who I will touch on later on. Alongside various misinterpreted biblical verses as seen as the second coming of Christ, as seen in the Holy book of revelation. As you read this paper I urge you to keep a bible open beside you, as you can quickly have access to the verse or chapter that I will be referencing. This will be done to protect the fairness, honesty and truthfulness of my analysis and critique. When analyzing scripture and different verse a lot of cross covering will be done. Whenever there will be a bible verse mentioned the appropriate quotation will be included as well, this will include the name of the holy book, its chapter and the verse number. To keep this paper to the highest standard and order I will attempt to quote from the Orthodox Bible. This choice of quotation from the orthodox bible is done so that the correct interpretation will be relayed over to this paper, so that with the guidance of the church fathers the proper interpretation will be accomplished. Having said of all of this the following will be done: A rigorous analysis of each

point that has been raised. By analyzing scripture, world events as well as theological doctrines, I will with discernment and humility I will attempt to prove as to why this movement is a perversion and direct attack of the holy apostolic Ethiopian Tawehedo Orthodox Church.

Part 1: History of the movement

The Rastafarian movement began in Jamaica by the American biographer Leonard P. Howell in the year of 1930. During this time the world had just experienced the devastation of WW1. And due to the deaths and defeat of the countries involved in this war there was a great need for a savior in the eyes of the Jamaicans and Ethiopians alike. This new ideology had sprung into being when Leonhard P. Howell had just come back from a trip to Ethiopia. Having been in a state of great spiritual deception guided by racial superiority, he falsely proclaimed the divinity of the then Emperor Haille Selassie. Having stated that this man is "God" he entered into a state of great spiritual deception, as this cannot be further from the truth.

This proclamation in itself is wrong as no mere mortal can be seen as divine. History teaches us all that many men and women alike have falsely claimed to be of a divine nature or of a divine union, but all have fallen short of being of the true God. They have misguided others into believing that they possess divine powers or supernatural feats, but have ultimately fallen short of the truth. This exact scenario was foretold in the holy scriptures "*And many false prophets shall rise, and deceive many*" (Matthew 24 verse 11), it is evident that this so-called declaration of a supposedly divine nature of Haille Selassie was no less guided by the spirit of the times. This one declaration put fourth by Leornhad P. Howell alongside Marcus Garvey (of whom I will talk about later) set in motion the ideology and theology of Rastafarianism

No mortal can be considered a God, and the early church fathers have improved the precision of analysing Christ's divine nature in accordance with the biblical scriptures. A brief discussion of Christology and the apparent 'divinity' of Haille selassie will be analyzed later on.

The term ‘’Rastafarian’’ can be traced back to the word “*rasta*” which is an adjective for describing someone who follows and believes in Haille Selassie as their God and saviour. This term “rasta” originates from the birth name of emperor Haile Selassie, his name being Ras Tafari. Having taken the birth name of the emperor Ras Tafari, followers of him combined it to form the movement known today as Rastafarianism. If we look at the language spoken in the ancient and holy land of Ethiopia we see there constitutes various ancient languages such as Ge’ez, aramaic and various other indigenous dialects.

For the etymology of the term “rastafari” we have to look at the language of aramaic. *Ras Tafari* according to Aramic roughly translates to the “ruler who must be feared” or “the one who who must be feared” , these meanings no less paint Haille Selassie not as a man who you must take as a weak man, but rather as someone who is strong and powerful.

From this analysis of the etymology of the term “Rastafarian” and “rasta” we can start to see that this term directly borrows the logic from that of Christianity. In that sense, the term “Christian” means to be a follower of Christ Jesus, following that logic the term “Christianity” refers to the overall make up and body of Christians that follow Christ. If we were to look deeper into the term “Christ” it finds its origin in the greek term: “χριστός” (christos) which translates to the anointed one or the messiah, which is why the holy archangel Gabriel told the Theotokos to call her child the Christ. The name of rastafari uses the same linguistic and etymological structure from Christianity to perverse the sanctity of Orthodox Christianity. The two meanings directly are in opposition to each other as there is the conflict of self sacrifice as shown by Christ (John 15:13) and the one to be feared / superior to all shown by Haille Selassie. “*By their fruits you shall know them*” (Matthew 7:15-20)

The Rastafarian movement can be translated as a movement that has to be feared or the sovereign group that has to rule over all. This type of behaviour can be found in the meaning of the term “rastafari” which was discussed earlier in the second passage. In the context of his royal bloodline it is a carefully chosen name as he was born to be the future king, however this is sprung out of context, as is the following title given to him on his coronation in 1930. He was given the title Haile Selassie which means the might of the holy trinity or the power of the holy trinity on his coronation in the year 1930. His full kingly title came to be the following: *The*

Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah, His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie I, King of Kings of Ethiopia, Lord of Lords, Elect of God , this kingly title has its roots in the new and old testament alike, taken from the holy books of Revelation and Genesis. Around the time of his coronation, there arose a few people who took his title as living proof that Jesus Christ himself had returned in the form of an Ethiopian Emperor.

Part 2: The supposed prophecy

To understand the Rastafarian mindset, one must examine the role of prophecy in the rastafari context. However, before we can understand "prophecy" within the Rastafarian belief system, an understanding of the role of prophecy in religion needs to be analyzed and defined. The very definition of prophecy according to the Oxford dictionary is "a declaration made by a prophet, especially a divinely inspired prediction, instruction, or revelation", from this lexical definition we can proceed. Within Orthodox Christianity a figure or multiple figures exists that would foretell or warn the nation of either an impending doom or of the arrival of a divine character. Within the context of this paper, I will look at the prophets in the Orthodox bible, various prophets in the bible who had prophesied that the messiah will come and redeem the world of its sin. An important fact that needs to be taken into account is that the timeline of these various biblical characters span across hundreds of years, through various cultural advancements and as well as through different geographical locations. Although in different times, each prophet spoke the truth and pointed towards the same Jesus Christ.

Prophets such as Isiah, Micah, David and Daniel, wrote about either one or many aspects of the God - man, or the Θεάνθρωπος (God man). Such as the prophet Isiah in his book prophesying the virgin birth of Jesus Christ (Isaiah 7:14) and the Divine Child and Eternal King found in Isaiah 9:6-7. Various other prophecies of Christ or of certain details of his life were recorded by the prophets in the Old Testament.

The people of Jamaica however, in particular Marcus Garvey, a Roman Catholic that had supposedly prophesied that a king and salvation for the people will come from Africa This statement from Marcus Garvey acted as a pivotal point in the forming of the Rastafarian movement, if this supposed “prophecy” were to come into fruition, then the people of Jamaica and Ethiopia would be saved from their racial and religious oppression. This “prophetic” statement issued by Marcus Garvey is as follows : *Look to Africa, where a black king shall be crowned, for the day of deliverance is near!* There are huge flaws found in this statement as well as the interpretation of it. There is ambiguity in his declaration of the king of Africa. In the history of African Kingdoms, the kings were always thought to be the one to deliver justice, freedom and equality to that of the people in the kingdom. It was the norm to call a king the bringer of justice, hope and freedom as many looked towards the ruler for help and support. Kings such as that of King Lalibela, King Mansa Musa etc. These kings all served as the one to deliver freedom and justice from all types of oppression whether it be racial, financial or national.

These kings were extremely important in the social hierarchy of an African nation, serving as the most feared and powerful individual in the kingdom. Responsible for all major decisions and for establishing peace and balance. From this reasoning we can see that the word that he used in his statement, does not point to a messiah or a divine person, but rather to an actual king that will be crowned. His statement does not make it evident which king he is referring to, because at the time of his statement many kings in Africa were being crowned. To associate Marcus Garvey's ambiguous and loose statement with Haille Selassie of Ethiopia is blatantly wrong, as his statement does not include any specific country or name that alludes to Ethiopia or Haille Selassie. We cannot associate a specific king or ruler to a vague statement and use that as a justification of a supposed fulfilled prophecy. In any system of belief, being clear about a specific person or moment in time is crucial as to keep the validity of that specific belief system. To strengthen the validity of any belief system, accurate prophecies or foretelling needs to be done, in such a manner that strips all ambiguity or vagueness. In this case we cannot assume that a specific individual matches a vague and open-ended declaration.

Just as the scriptures have warned us of false prophets and rulers, so too can be said of these times. The second half of the statement must be called into question as well. “*The day of*

deliverance is near!" This statement is as vague as the first half of the statement, as one could look at this from multiple perspectives. From a racial and colonial perspective this could hold, as at the time of this statement there existed racial tension between Ethiopia and Italy. So from that lens the future king that will be crowned can be seen as an individual that would rid the country of all racial oppression. Another view that is held by the followers of Haille Selassie, is that they took his words as the literal meaning. That Haille Selassie will be the actual deliverer of justice and glory, similar to Jesus Christ when he will one day return to judge both the dead and the living. According to the Rastafarians Haille Selassie is seen to have fulfilled the second interpretation of Marcus Garvey's statement, which associates him with the divine.

This political interpretation of the second half of his statement logically makes the most sense as it appeals to a more accepted and proper structure of African Kingship. As mentioned earlier, African kings were known to bring about change and freedom from oppressive forces. From this reasoning we can deduce that Marcus Garvey's supposed prophetic statement about a crowned king bringing salvation to Africans is nothing more than a misinterpretation of a simple statement.

Part 3: Misinterpretation of Scripture

If examined properly, the theological framework of the Rastafarian movement has its foundation in the biblical texts paired with historical events. With its foundation found in the scriptures one would expect the message of Rastafarianism to flow in accordance with the message of the scriptures, but after careful investigation and analysis it is not the case. How can a system of beliefs claim to trace its origins to a specific text, but when put under theological investigation, contradicts the very text in which it was founded in. That makes it logically invalid. Besides this issue there is a great misinterpretation of scripture found in this heretical movement, having various verses taken out of context, which negates the actual meaning of that specific phrase within the context of the book itself. This view is dangerous as such actions have led to the justification of slavery by the Americans, British and Dutch. From this view I will dissect the misinterpretation of scripture.

The first issue we need to discuss is the supposed scripture that Haille Selassie fulfills. We trace the verse to the book of revelation, specifically Revelations 19:11-16. This verse reads as follows : "*11 I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war. 12 His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. 13 He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. 14 The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. 15 Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter."[a] He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. 16 On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KINGS OF KINGS AND LORDS OF LORD."*

This verse can easily be misinterpreted and twisted, whether for personal gain or just for plain ignorance. As without the holy spirit, the bringer of truth, it is just words and anything can be understood from these verses, if the spirit is deception and darkness, anything it touches distorts the truth. The Rastafarians had taken this verse and upon seeing their king in the white horse, they had concluded that he fits the description. This can not be further from the truth as this title is reserved for Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. If we carefully look at this specific line we can make a close reference to John 1:1 and John 1:14. In the book of John the "Word of God" was repeatedly being used as a name for the *Λόγος του Θεού* (Logos of God), from the wisdom and knowledge passed down from the early church fathers, monks and bishops, the logos of God spoken about is Jesus Christ, who became flesh, was crucified and who was resurrected 3 days later. Therefore the term of the word of God cannot be associated with anyone else besides Jesus Christ.

The context of the state of the world is extremely important here as well, this is to take place at the end of the world, where the Antichrist has been revealed and where judgment will pour over the world by this second coming. But I urge you to look out your window and up into the sky, has Christ come back and has he judged the world? Has he judged the living and the dead? To put it plainly, he has not done it yet. So the idea of Haille Selassie being the second coming of Christ is extremely damaging to the holy body of Christ. As it undermines the severity of the actual return of Christ - on a day in which we do not know, therefore let us prepare for it. There is a subtle danger in not seeking guidance when reading scripture. More often than not when we

read scripture we come to preconceived thoughts or biases already in our mind, and we often look for external evidence out in the world as to strengthen our biases. This is not a good way to go about reading the holy scriptures as it is not a mere personal opinion that is at stake, but rather the understanding of the scriptures itself. If we are constantly looking at the scriptures through our own biased lens we can take scripture out of context or even twist them to suit sometimes selfish needs or desires.This logic can be applied to that part of revelation as a verse cannot be cherry picked and understood as a singular sentence or statement. No, but rather as a whole system of dependent books and verses that all rely on each other to keep continuity and similarity. No single single can be understood without understanding the context in which it was written in. Various other verses were taken out of context but since this is only a brief critique I only included verse.

Part 4: The Misunderstanding of the holy Icons by the Rastafarians

"Indeed, the honour paid to an image traverses it, reaching the model, and he who venerates the image, venerates the person represented in that image."

Icons in the Orthodox Church are a crucial part of the theology of the church's theology and teaching. The icons as described by St John of Damascus, who was a famous defender of the veneration and depiction of icons famously said "The Holy Icons are the window into heaven" , they are not just simply paint applied to a piece of wood or canvas, but are sacred affirmations of the faith. So it is necessary to understand the role of icons in the Orthodox Church, as well as understanding how such a sacred and reverent form of adoration was perverted by the Rastafarians. And how, through the perversion of these icons, the Rastafarians used it as supposed proof of the fact that Jesus being depicted as "white" meant that they had to find and worship a "black Jesus". This notion that there is a racially based deity is absolutely illogical as it goes against what is said in the holy scriptures.

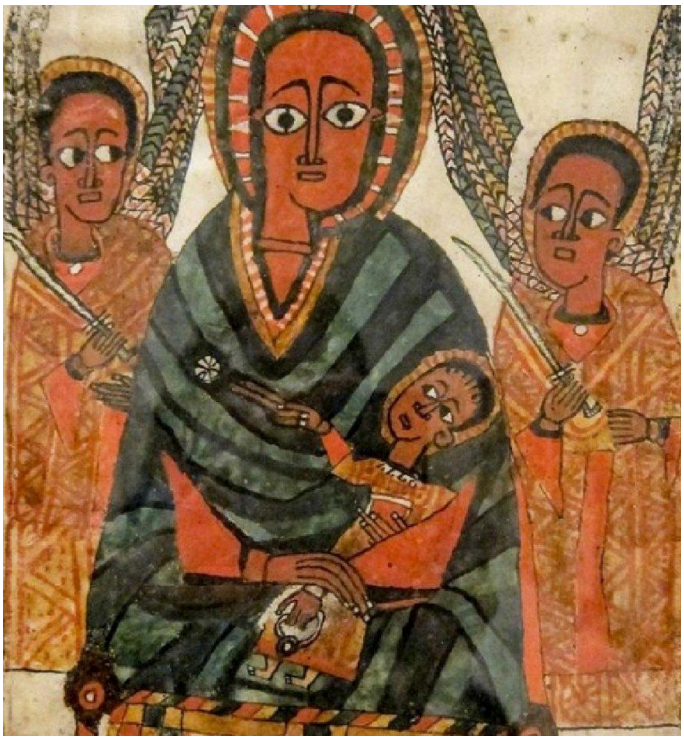
The very definition of Icon according to the Oxford Dictionary is a "*painting, statue, or representation of Christ or another holy figure, typically executed on wood and used ceremonially in the Byzantine and other Eastern Churches*", from this lexical definition we move on to the origins of iconography in Eastern Orthodoxy. According to the tradition of the church fathers, the first icon to be painted was that of the Theotokos by the Evangelist and Apostle St Luke. The original icon depicting the Blessed Virgin was lost to the continual raids by various pirates and bandits. However we do have an idea of how it ought to have first looked. On the left is an icon of the blessed Virgin with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It is a replica of what the first icon painted by St Luke would have looked like. It shows the tenderness and intimate relationship between Christ and the Blessed Virgin, it is quite admirable to behold their shared love and affection. Many other icons depict such a relationship between Christ and his blessed Mother, many theologians have pointed out the very nature of the icon is to support the very incarnation of the word of God (John 1:14), to show that Christ truly walked and spoke with the people of the earth. The icon represents a metaphysical matter as the very purpose of its being is to reflect the one being depicted, whether it be Christ, the blessed Virgin or of the saints. It is for the awakening of the soul to understand its true purpose, the deification of man and the completion of man in God's likeness. It is the fulfillment of God's design to make man in his likeness and image, removing all worldliness and sin, to partake in the uncreated light of the All Holy Trinity.

In the early beginnings of Rastafarianism, the rejection of the "white Jesus" was a key aspect of their theology and this move acted as a driving force against the "white man's religion" (that is how many Rastafarians elders refer to western Christianity, contrastingly Eastern Christianity are extremely diverse in their members). The justification used by the Rastafarians against the

supposed white icons of the “white God” as an argument can be systematically dismantled by appealing to scripture and by looking at the process of figure painting in art.

It will be appropriate for us to look at the holy scripture first as they reveal the very truth of the matter, and it is achieved without the appeal to secular knowledge. Thus, let us start by appealing to the holy scriptures. We begin by carefully examining the verse in Genesis 1:27 “*So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them, male and female he created them*.“, this verse along indicates that all people, irrespective of race, culture or gender was created in the very image of God. Whether the individual is a Greek or Jew, we are all created and cared for by Christ our God. Each human was made and will always be made in the likeness of the triune God. If I were to believe in and follow a ruler, but disagree with his actions and beliefs, am I then truly a follower or a pretender? If the Rastafarians were to claim that their theological framework is embedded within the bible, but yet ignore certain verses, then are they truly followers of the bible? It is evident that they are not the followers of truth and if they were, they would not consider Christ to be a racially dependent God. It is a perversion and a blaspheme to consider that there are specific deities for certain racial categories, Christ is the God of everyone and all the nations shall bow and declare that Jesus is the Christ (Phillipians 2:10-11).

Let us analyze the issue from an iconographic perspective. In the context of iconography it is important to look at the principles and design rules of art. Within the depiction of figures or of any image there always needs to be a reference, unless the image was inspired at the unconscious level (similar to the process of surrealism). Thus when painting a figure the use of a reference is always important for the correct portrayal of facial proportions and the correct composition of the body. As figures cannot be made to have mistakes as these icons depict the divine and as a result a lot of care and reverence are taken into the production. Thus, within the context of the old iconography depicted by Western Christianity (Roman Catholicism and Anglicanism) the need for a reference was extremely important. As the icons needed to be hyper realistic and 3



dimensional, this could only be achieved through the use of a reference of a person from real life. The skin tone, facial characteristics and body proportions were used as models for their iconographic portrayal of the divine. It is impossible to have such accurate depictions of the body without having someone showcase it as a reference. Various icons in Roman Catholic churches and especially Basilicas depict realistic forms of Christ and the Virgin Mary. The icons features such as the facial features and skin tone were dependent on the ethnicity of the reference model. As we see that the depictions of the blessed Virgin Mary and of Christ look different in each country and culture. However it is important to note that within Eastern Orthodoxy the need for a reference was not needed, as each country depicted the divine within their own racial identity. Each different country had their own style for depicting the divine, although the church fathers warned against painting iconography purely for aesthetics or as a showcase of craft, but instead let it remind the observer of the incarnation of the word of the eternal God. And not some method of racial oppression of dominance of one race to another. Ethiopian Orthodox iconography has depicted Christ, the Theotokos and the Saints as black for over 1,600 years. This does not equate to the racial identity of Christ and the Saints, but it is a reminder of the incarnation of the Logos of Man and that we were created in his likeness.

Part 5: Christ's Nature and Haille Selassie Supposed divine nature

The study of Christ's nature is collectively known as Christology. In the history of Christianity there have been numerous attempts to blaspheme the nature of Christ, which resulted in the springing up of various heresies such Arianism (which denied Christ's divinity) and Apollinarianism (which denied his full humanity). To allow for the reader to understand my views on Christology, my approach will be through the theology of the Eastern Orthodox Church, which results in the belief in dyophytism as opposed to the miaphytism belief held by the Oriental Orthodox (Ethiopian, Armenian, Coptic and Syriac). From this view I will discuss the supposed divine nature described by the Rastafarians to be found in Rastafarians and how a poor understanding in Christ's nature led us to the heretical teachings we are having today.

Before I address the heretical teachings of the Rastafarians let us start at the lexical definitions. What is the definition of dyophytism and why is Christology important? The teaching of Dyophytism according to the Orthodox Wikipedia (2010) is that it teaches that Jesus Christ had two natures and two wills. When we say that he possesses two natures we essentially declare that Christ fully had the qualities of both Man and God, both faculties in its utmost entirety. That is how he was shown to be able to feel and relate to us mere mortals while also remaining part of the All holy trinity. Christ being both fully man and God was able to suffer what we suffer while also showcasing his divine nature, we see this play out through various passages in the scripture. Jesus was weeping upon the raising Lazarus from the dead (John 11:35), while raising Lazarus from the dead, Christ also reminds us that the presence of God is always near and is close to the broken in heart, as God himself wept for humanity. His two wills follow out of logical necessity from the very fact that he has two natures, being fully divine and man. Hence the two wills are evident in Jesus Christ. When we talk about these two wills declare that Jesus Christ has a complete divine will alongside having a complete human will. The human will inside Christ fully submits to his divine will, as seen in various parts of the scripture where his human will was seen to be fearful and hesitant. He was fearful, hungry and angry at times but it was not dirty with the stain of sin, it was the full experience of human nature but without sin and the passions. For the word could not have dwelled (John 1:14) amongst us if he had not experienced human emotion

and thought. Christ, being the incarnation of the Word of God took on human flesh to reverse the severe that occurred between Man and God at the garden of Eden. Jesus, in his love for mankind took upon the suffering of Man to purify it and to fill it with divine love and purpose.

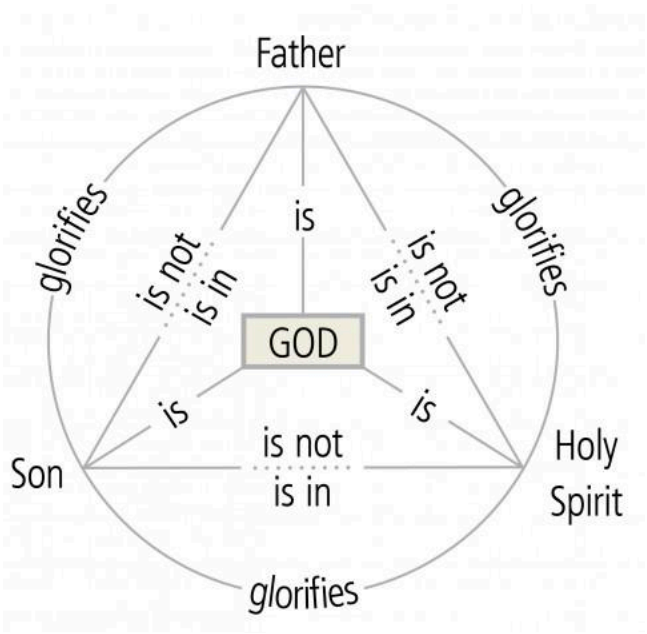
The Rastafarians declare that the nature of Haille Selasie is divine and that according to sources, he actually performed miracles. Among these supposed miracles, when he was a child he fashioned a bird out of a piece of paper and it low and behold it turned into an actual bird. Or on one occasion when wild lions were brought to his palace. Upon the lion entering the palace Haille Selassie apparently tamed the lion which convinced the people of his supposed divinity. Another instance is when Ethiopia had been in a drought for quite some time and the agricultural state was declining, followers of Haille Selassie claim that he had summoned rain from the clouds to relieve the people of their suffering under the drought. Now, upon hearing all these claims that Haille Selassie was of a divine nature goes directly against what the scriptures taught. Haille Selassie was married, had kids, ate and slept like anyone else on the earth. All these characteristics are common to all humans, as we perpetually need times of rest and digest, man cannot be divine. Let us assume that the nature of Haille S was indeed that of divine and that he had all the characteristics of a divine being, this would make him all knowing, all powerful and all good. By these very parameters the very needs of a human would not be required of a being with a divine nature, as God transcends all the faculties of man. God cannot be limited by the very biology of man, as this would contradict his very nature as divine. Thus we cannot assume that a person is divine unless they have shown proof of their divine nature to certain individuals, and if they have not shown it or at least given revelations that point toward their divine nature we cannot believe them. We can thus conclude

that due to the theology of divine nature and human nature we can conclude that the supposed divinity of Haille Selassie is no more than an attempt to corrupt Christology and the scriptures.

Part 6: The Holy Trinity and The Imperial Title

The All Holy Trinity is arguably the most fundamental and most essential part of Christianity. In the days of the early church there have been various councils and discussions regarding the definitive nature of the trinity, the roles and relationship of each person as well as the definition of who and what "God" is. As a result of these councils we now have definitive answers to the questions posed earlier and through the understanding of Trinitarian theology we can dismantle the skewed belief found in Rastafarianism regarding the trinity.

It is important that we lay down the necessary theological terminologies so as to reduce the amount of confusion and ambiguity. Trinitarian theology within Christianity is dedicated to the studying and understanding of the All Holy Trinity, attempting to have a deep understanding of the workings as well as how the trinity is revealed through Jesus Christ. The word Trinitarian stems from the root word trinity, which is based on the Latin word "*trinus*" which means threefold. This word is used as a way to describe and explain the very nature of the Trinity. We define God through the very nature of the trinity, which is God the Father, God the Son (Jesus Christ) and God the Holy Spirit. Three persons which are distinct from each other, all these hypostases exist statically, while sharing one divine essence or nature. All these hypostases (or person) make up the very definition of who God is. The shared essence of each hypostasis in the trinity describes "what" God is. A key statement to be found in the



trinatarian theology is that the The Father is not the Son, The Son is not the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit is not the Father. The relationship between each person in the trinity is special and extremely important as each has distinct roles that are achieved. It is understood and accepted by theologians that it is God the Father who begets, God the Son who is begotten and the Holy Spirit that proceeds from God the Father. This definition serves to clear any confusion around whether each person is seen as exactly the same, so when we describe God we essentially describe the triune deity which consists of three distinct hypostases each having the same essence and nature.

The view of the Holy Proceeding from the Father and the Son is held by the Roman Catholics and the other denominations of Western Christianity. The filioque is the term that was added to the Nicene Creed by the Roman Catholic Church in A.D 589 but was officially used in the liturgy in A.D 1014 by Pope Benedict VIII. To avoid confusion I will be using the Nicene Creed that was first drafted, written and accepted by the ecumenical Nicene council in A.D 325, it states that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son.

However just as Christ has warned us to be aware of False Christs and saviours that will appear so are we seeing this play out in real time.(Matthew 24:24).

In the teachings of the Rastafarians they contain teachings that directly attack the trinity and beliefs around the trinity. Their beliefs are that Haille Selassie is the returned Christ that was described in the book of Revelations, and consequently will judge the living and the dead. This coupled with the fact that they confidently declare that he is God the Father, the source of all creation and fully unbegotten. They praise, worship, give thanks and sing

to Haille Selassie as their Lord and Saviour and as a result they see him as the fulfillment of the holy scriptures. They neither see that hell is a real place but rather that it is a state of being and that since the second judgment has already taken place, they exist in “paradise” already here on earth. They are taught to renounce that Christ is God while also acknowledging the holy trinity. Instead of embracing the fullness and truth of God, they reduce the trinity to nothing more than a response to colonial and racial oppression, unaware that God surpasses all racial and cultural bonds.

These are false teachings used by the spirit of the times to redirect the people away from the truth. The Father is invisible, uncreated and is beyond what we cannot comprehend. Us as mere humans cannot fathom or comprehend the power of God. In the holy scriptures Jesus Christ declares that no one has seen the Father except he who has come from God (John 6:46), this is referring to the fact that we cannot comprehend God in his fullness with all his grace, mercy and power. The human body will completely disintegrate as our minds cannot fully come to grips with God the Father in his entirety. So there is a contradiction here with the nature of God, as he need not come in the form of an entirely different person from another country and language. God the father cannot incarnate into another human being as this would contradict the very plan that he has formulated, the only begotten son is Jesus Christ.

Thus we can conclude that the theological framework within Rastafarianism is flawed and attempts to perverse and twist a well defined definition within Christianity.

Conclusion

This paper systematically examined the core theological claims of the Rastafarian movement, demonstrating how its history, reliance on vague political predictions, and structural misinterpretations of scripture directly contradict the historical and ancient Orthodox Christian faith. I have intentionally omitted a social or anthropological study of Rastafarian culture, focusing entirely on a dogmatic defense of the ancient Orthodox faith against modern error.

I do not claim to be a Christian apologetic or theologian but rather a sinner who seeks to point others towards the true Light of the world.

May the Lord Jesus Christ have mercy on us all!

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